

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, RIVERSIDE

BERKELEY • DAVIS • IRVINE • LOS ANGELES • RIVERSIDE • SAN DIEGO • SAN FRANCISCO



SANTA BARBARA • SANTA CRUZ

DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGY  
RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA 92521



12 July 1988

Dr. Joshua Lederberg  
Rockefeller University

Dear Josh,

If you have to lecture this month, I should reply to your questions promptly.

Enclosed is a xerox of page 21 from Crampton's history of Columbia's Department of Zoology. It shows the layout in 1897-1898. Many changes occurred thereafter that consisted mainly of moving walls. I would have to return to Schermerhorn to check some of the details but, in general, I can answer your questions.

The fly room was 613 (there was always the problem that the 6th floor of Schermerhorn was level with the 9th floor of Schermerhorn Extension; eventually all that was 6 was changed to 9). In Morgan's time I believe that the walls of 614 (on the plan) had been removed and possibly the east part of 615.

Part of 615 had, earlier, been the chemical room and I suspect that is where the father of the enzyme chemist, Northrup, blew himself to pieces when he lit a match to see if there was any alcohol left in the barrel (or so the story was told me by Dr. McGregor).

612 might have been eliminated but I know that Morgan had his office in the area marked 612 and 611. I suspect that 612 really was his office and that 611 was eventually to become part of the Dept. Office. I know that it was my office at one of the periods when I was chairman. To the east of 613 and 614 was the men's room and a tiny elevator which, in your days, was probably run by "Mrs. Schermerhorn" a huge lady who, when operating the elevator, had room for no more than two passengers. She had a large growth on her cheek that was a challenge to every histology class--but she never let them cut it off.

What is shown as 618 was divided later by a north-south partition to form the hall that led to the 9th floor of Schermerhorn Ext. By the time you got to Columbia, there were probably the two "Butcher Box" coldrooms that Dodik used for Drosophila (there is a story about them, too). The main, east part, of 618 was the lab for upper division zoology courses. Pollister gave both Histology and Comparative Anatomy there and

5

as your sheet notes Speith had the lab. for his entomology.

620 was still the aquarium room where, when you came, there was a colony of axolotls. We never figured out how to get them to breed on our schedule but from time to time they would decide to have a go at it and we would have fine eggs.

The main door to the Library was in 616. Probably by your time, 617 had become the "New Journals" room where every Monday (maybe Tuesday) the new stuff was put out. 619 had been incorporated into the library.

The area labelled 606 was still full of cases but 603 and 605 had disappeared. They may have been added to the big lecture room--601. 602 was the lab for Zoo. 1-2.

I cannot remember who had 604 when you came. Hans Ris was there at one time (as your sheet of paper shows) and I believe Pollister at another. Pollister had his office there and a small lab on the 9th floor of Sch. Ext.--next to Wilson. When Wilson finally left, Arthur moved over there entirely.

609 would have been McGregor's office. The tiny room, 610, is where the Dept. Secretary was housed. It may have been Miss Hansen when you came--I cannot remember how long she lasted. Bertha Schrag replaced her. Your notes for 1941 are correct. When Dunn became chairman, he used the little room, 610, and Bertha Schrag was in 611. Annette Terzian served more as Dunn's private secretary and spent much of her time near his office on the 8th floor of Sch. Ext. She, by the way, is here in Los Angeles. I will try to contact her someday.

After the Morgan group, except for Lancefield, left for Cal Tech, 613 was used as the lab for Zoology 101-102 by McGregor. That was the "basic" graduate course and, in theory, 101 was devoted to the invertebrates and 102 to the vertebrates. However Dr. Mac never finished the lower invertebrates until about Xmas. He raced through the higher invert. phyla but never reached the protochordates until the spring. He loved them--having given a whole course devoted to them in the early 1900s. Amphioxus and its friends were well thought of at Columbia. Arthur Willey had done that fine book on Amphioxus and the Ancestry of the Vertebrates (1894), which was published by Columbia. Dr. Mac would then have only about one lecture on birds and maybe two on mammals.

When Dr. Mac retired, John Gregg was hired to give 101--solely on invertebrates and continue to use 613. Those were the days when one was thought to be able to teach any undergraduate course. John did poorly and later Ned Hodgson replaced him. Some time during those years I taught all or part of it also and used 613 for the lab. I also used it for the lab in Experimental Embryology but cannot remember whether that was in your days or not. In the 1960s when things began to really fall apart, there would be whole years when 613 lay fallow. Sad fate for such an important place.

Before I left Columbia I made some feeble attempts to have 613 kept, maybe restored to the "Fly Room" days, as a museum-shrine. There was no interest.

Enclosed are two reprints--I may have sent you copies earlier--that relate in some ways to the old Columbia Department of Zoology.

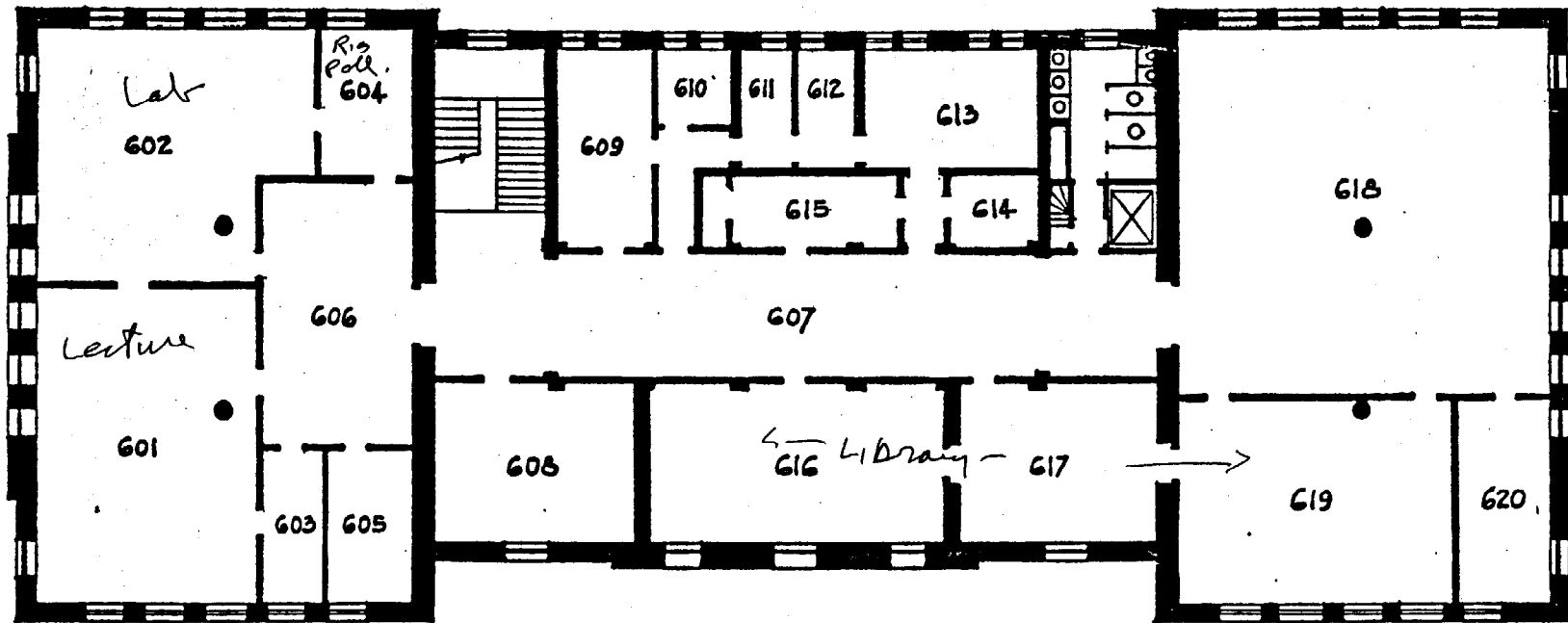
Does the chapter in Sturtevant's History have any useful information about the geography of the Fly Room? (My copy is home so I can't check.)

There are three pictures in my Essay for SAAWOK--Genetics. Fig 29 is the north east corner of 613; Fig. 30 is the northwest corner, and Fig. 31 the south east corner.

My best  
Yours

Crampton,  
(Note)

JUL 13 1908



FOURTH FLOOR PLAN OF SCHERMERHORN HALL  
ROOMS AND ALLOCATIONS, 1897-1898

601, 602—Graduate laboratories. 603—B. B. Griffin. 604—Dr. Calkins. 605—Professor Dean. 606—Osteology cases. 607—Hall and museum cases of invertebrates and vertebrates. 608—Professor Osborn. 609—Professor Wilson. 610—N. R. Harrington. 611—H. E. Crampton. 612—Dr. Strong. 613—Neurology laboratory. 614—Janitor's room. 615—Chemical and glassware room. 616—John I. Northrup Memorial Library. 617—Assistant's and preparation room, Dr. McGregor. 618—Undergraduate laboratory. 619—Lecture room. 620—Aquarium room.